



# MEETING MINUTES

May 6, 2013

## Members Present:

Rob Caruso, Co-Chair  
Girard Plante, Co-Chair  
John Lojek  
Lucie Chansky  
Jane Brown

## Regrets:

Barbara Lischinsky  
Rosemary Larking

## Advisor:

Sergeant Jay Babcock

## Staff Present:

Nicole Tocci, Inspectional Services  
Alice Walkup, Senior Planner, Community Development  
Anne Marie Belrose, CD Manager  
Bill Paille, City Traffic Engineer  
Patrick Baxter, Assistant City Traffic Engineer

## Guests:

Robert Solomon  
Eve Tapper

## Meeting:

Rob Caruso called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

## 1. Minutes:

Jane Brown made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2013 meeting and J. Lojek seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.

## 2. Open Meeting violation complaint.

Girard Plante explained to the Commission a complaint that he received about supposed violations of the open meeting law as regards the COD. Girard explained that the complaining party was a person known to him and others who was in the habit of complaining about issues of the COD and other public agencies and that the complaints were baseless.

John Lojek suggested that the Commission adopt a protocol that all such issues be directed to the new ADA/ADA Coordinator so that individual members of the COD are not involved in the processing of such complaints. There was a consensus that this was a good suggestion.

## 3. Introduction of new ADA/ 504 Coordinator.

John Lojek, as Commissioner of Inspectional Services for the City of Newton, introduced Joel Reider as the newly hired 504/ADA Coordinator. Mr. Lojek pointed out that the new hire will be working in his Dept. John explained that because of the applicant pool for this part time position he hired Joel because of his belief that he was the most capable candidate.

Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

Candace Havens  
Director  
Planning & Development

Senior Planner Alice  
Walkup  
Community Development

CD Manager  
Anne Marie Belrose

Members

Rob Caruso, Co-Chair  
Girard Plante, Co-Chair  
Jane Brown  
Lucie Chansky  
Jini Fairley  
Rosemary Larking  
John Lojek  
Barbara Lischinsky

Advisor  
Sergeant Jay Babcock  
Newton Police Department

1000 Commonwealth  
e.

Newton, MA 02459  
T 617/796-1120  
F 617/796-1142

[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)

---

## **CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

### **Commission On Disability**

---

He stated that because this position is a half time job and the qualifications for the position are somewhat obscure, Mr Reider was the candidate with the greatest potential for success in this job. Mr. Reider then explained his background in Architectural design, signage work and 521 signage design. Mr. Reider is a Newton resident and noted that he himself has an auditory disability which has helped him to understand the need for the work.

#### **4. CDBG Access Projects Report.**

Alice Walkup explained to the COD that a new Design Engineer had been hired in the Engineering Division to work on curb cut and other access projects. Alice then went through the funding and balances of the present projects. (see attached report)

Ann Marie Belrose presented an update on the vestibule for the Newton Senior Center. She explained that the vestibule will be fully funded through the City Budget instead of through curb cut funds. The new structure will be considered a temporary structure, although it will be glass and aluminum. The construction is projected to start in September 2013.

Bill Paille, City Traffic Engineer, made a presentation of the Newton Centre Improvements in which the City has changed the designs and approach to include bump-outs and crosswalks and other design features that will increase pedestrian safety and change some traffic patterns to provide increased visibility, which should aid with disability access and safety. Lucie asked about the light(s) to be installed. Bill explained that the traffic light was eliminated from the project and that funding was re-directed into "other" safety features that they believe will be more effective. Bill explained that the paving markings would be brighter and that they are trying to design in more lighting to increase visibility. Bob Solomon spoke about his personal experience in front of the Newton Centre CVS which he called very dangerous because of the traffic cutting between lanes to move ahead along Centre St, toward Beacon at that point. Bill Paille said he believed that the new project would make that area much safer due to greater visibility of pedestrians at cross walks. Lucie pointed out that the Beacon and Centre St. intersection was also a very dangerous one. Sgt. Babcock added that he was getting a \$5000 State grant for cross walk safety "stings" and that he would be matching those funds with his overtime money to enforce and "educate" on cross walk/ pedestrian laws.

Rob Caruso asked if the Highlands Station area was under consideration for access improvements and enforcements. Alice said that O'Hara's was interested in a new bump out at Walnut and Floral to increase outdoor seating and that that project would improve access there. John Lojek said that O'Hara's wanted to "bump out" the corner of Floral to provide more seating and that it could provide an opportunity to create better access and perhaps some traffic calming features. Bill Paille commented that if you address one side of the street the other side needs to be addressed as well. Rob commented that the area was a mess.

Bill Paille said they are looking at the portion of Walnut St. from Homer to Centre St. but don't currently have the funds to fix it although they are designing the work for the future. Robert Solomon said that Walnut and Lincoln is far more important than Walnut and Floral. John Lojek commented that indeed that intersection was heavily used and that Engineering might look into some minor mitigation in that intersection.

Sgt. Babcock reported the results of the crosswalk violations for Feb., March, and April as well as the taxi stand violations. He said that there are no more verbal warnings and that tickets issue in first offense.

Robert Solomon asked Sgt. Babcock about U turns and when they were allowed. Sgt. Babcock told the group that U Turns are not allowed wherever there are solid lines.

#### **5. HP Spaces at NNHS on Hull St.**

---

## **CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

### **Commission On Disability**

---

David Koses, City Traffic Planner, asked the COD if he could go back to the MAAB to ask them to amend the Variance for the NNHS/Hull Street area to only provide one (1) pHP space instead of the three that the city agreed to provide during planning for the new NNHS. David presented months of data in which he observed the use of the spaces, which showed that the spaces were rarely, if ever, used by HP placard or plate users. John Lojek explained to the COD the genesis of the variance and that it was requested without consultation to the COD during the building process. He stated that the school has more HP spaces than required, on campus. The spaces on Hull St. are in high demand for everyday parking for the school and we are encouraging people to illegally use the spaces. Lucie moved that the COD formulate a letter requesting that the MAAB amend the variance to allow the reduction of two spaces to provide for a single HP space at the Hull St. entrance location. Jane Brown seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **6. MAAB Variance request re: Yogurtland @ 1231 Centre St.**

The COD reviewed the drawings and request from Yogurtland for the variance that the MAAB has already approved. John Lojek explained to the COD that it is very common to have this issue with older buildings which don't match the sidewalks and that structurally it is very difficult to comply because of the floor joists, etc. John said that he agreed that the MAAB variance decision was a good one and that the plans as drawn were a very good improvement over the existing condition. Robert Solomon asked about the adjacent entryway of Panera Bread and John Lojek told the COD that it was compliant. John moved that the decision of the MAAB be approved, seconded by Jane Brown and the motion was approved unanimously.

#### **7. New Business**

Robert Solomon brought up the issue of light rail access at Newton Highlands. He stated that a new raised platform was proposed that would speed boarding time for persons with disabilities. The new lifts have already sped up the process while they are trying to figure out another solution.

Rob Caruso asked Sgt. Babcock about the Ticketing program. Sgt. Reported that they are writing about 10 tickets a week and they have confiscated 4 placards being misused. They "sting" program should start about June 1, 2013

Sgt. Babcock explained the process for confiscating the placards and that he requires the actual placard holder to come to the Police Station to retrieve the placard and then they explain the reasons for the citation in person.



---

# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Commission On Disability

---

Setti D. Warren  
Mayor

Candace Havens  
Director  
Planning & Development

Senior Planner Alice  
Walkup  
Community Development

CD Manager  
Anne Marie Belrose

Members  
Chair  
Rob Caruso, Co-Chair  
Girard Plante, Co-Chair  
Jane Brown  
Lucie Chansky  
Jini Fairley  
Rosemary Larking  
John Lojek  
Barbara Lischinsky

Advisor  
Sergeant Jay Babcock  
Newton Police Department

1000 Commonwealth  
Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459  
T 617/796-1120  
F 617/796-1142

[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)